

DIOCESAN PRESS SERVICE

THE EPISCOPAL CHURCH

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**CHURCH ASKED TO HELP
EAST AFRICA VICTIMS**

NEW YORK -- Presiding Bishop John M. Allin has urged all Episcopalians to respond, through a special appeal, to the victims of the famine that has overrun much of East Africa.

In a letter to all parishes and dioceses of the Episcopal Church, Bishop Allin contrasts the traditional sense of joy that prevails at Christmas with the situation in eastern Africa:

"For those millions of our brothers and sisters, many of whom are refugees, who live in famine and neglect in East Africa, this season is with little hope and without joy.

"Each person caught up in this tragedy is unique. Each has an identity in the eyes of the Lord. Each needs love -- as well as food to survive, medicine to ward off pestilence, shelter against glaring sun and drifting sands.

"I am therefore designating the stricken lands of East Africa for this year's Christmas/Epiphany Appeal of the Presiding Bishop's Fund for World Relief. I ask all Episcopalians to share of their bounty and blessings so that the people of these countries may have life."

Millions of people in a dozen countries from Ethiopia in the north through Mozambique are victims of this famine and are likely to remain so for months, and possibly years, to come. Famine is a periodic fact of life in this region but the interlocking causes of war, drought, mismanagement and lagging food production have moved it far beyond the ability of any of the affected countries to counter alone.

Bishop Allin's letter will be accompanied by a fact sheet detailing the crisis and the ways in which the Presiding Bishop's Fund for World Relief works to alleviate the effects and the causes of the disaster.

Contributors are asked to send checks, designated "East Africa," to the Presiding Bishop's Fund for World Relief, 815 Second Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10017.

PICTURE CAPTIONS

#80381/1 These East Africans are seeking shelter from the fierce rays of the sun at the Harar Refugee Camp in the Beletweine District of Somalia. Millions of people in a dozen countries from Ethiopia in the north through Mozambique are victims of a famine that has overrun much of East Africa. Presiding Bishop John M. Allin has issued a special Christmas/Epiphany Appeal in which he asks all Episcopalians "to share of their bounty and their blessings so that the people of these countries may have life." Contributions may be sent to the Presiding Bishop's Fund for World Relief (marked "East Africa"), Episcopal Church Center, 815 Second Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10017. (Photo Credit: UNICEF).

#80381/2 Victims of a famine that has overrun much of East Africa are given food and drink at the Sigalow Refugee Camp in Somalia. Millions of people in a dozen countries from the sandy beaches of Ethiopia on the Red Sea to the rolling hills of Zimbabwe in East Africa are victims of hunger and despair because of a deadly famine. Thousands have died in the relief camps from malnutrition and a host of hunger-related diseases. Presiding Bishop John M. Allin has issued a special Christmas/Epiphany Appeal in which he asks all Episcopalians to share their blessings with victims of the famine. Contributions may be sent to the Presiding Bishop's Fund for World Relief (marked "East Africa"), Episcopal Church Center, 815 Second Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10017. (Photo Credit: UNICEF).

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NOTE: A map of the affected East Africa region will be included in the DPS mailing of November 6 as additional art work to accompany this release.

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